

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1861

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 8116

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, IN

SUBJ: INDO-PAK RELATIONS

REF: NEW DELHI 11660

SUMMARY: PAK MFA OFFICIAL TOOK UNUSUALLY GLOOMY
VIEW OF PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENT OF INDO-PAK
RELATIONS FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF GOI PROTEST NOTE
CHARGING PAK MISSIONS ABROAD ARE SPREADING WORD THAT
INDIA INTENDS TO LAUNCH DIVERSIONARY ATTACK AGAINST
PAKISTAN AND ARE ORGANIZING ANTI-INDIAN DEMONSTRATIONS.
HE WAS ALSO CONCERNED BY ALLEGED STIFFENING OF INDIAN
ATTITUDE REGARDING SALAL DAM DISPUTE
AND FAILURE, SO FAR, OF GOI TO REPLY TO PAK INVITA-
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TION FOR ANOTHER TRY AT RESOLUTION OF CIVIL AIR

DISPUTE. HE SAID IT WOULD BE REGRETTABLE IF INDO-PAK RIVALRY FOR UNSC SEAT PROVED DETRIMENTAL TO THEIR BILATERAL RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN SEPTEMBER 3 DISCUSSION WITH POL COUNSELOR, MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL (SOUTH ASIA) HAYAT MEHDI TOOK AN UNUSUALLY GLOOMY VIEW OF PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN INDO-PAK RELATIONS.

2. MEHDI SAID THAT SEVERAL DISCONCERTING DEVELOPMENTS HAD RECENTLY OCCURRED. MOST IMPORTANT OF THESE WAS RECEIPT HERE IN LAST FEW DAYS OF AN INDIAN PROTEST NOTE. ACCORDING MEHDI, GOI COMPLAINED ABOUT RECENT STATEMENTS MADE BY PAK MISSIONS ABROAD ALLEGING THAT INDIA INTENDED TO LAUNCH A MILITARY ADVENTURE AGAINST PAKISTAN IN ORDER TO BOLSTER PRIME MINISTER GANDHI'S POLITICAL POSITION, AND CHARGED THAT PAK MISSIONS HAD ORGANIZED ANTI-INDIAN DEMONSTRATIONS PROTESTING AGAINST THE BANNING OF THE JAMAAT-I-ISLAM IN INDIA. MEHDI SAID THAT BOTH CHARGES WERE BASELESS. IN CONNECTION WITH THE FIRST, HE SAID THAT SINCE THE NEW DELHI TALKS IN MAY PAK MISSIONS ABROAD HAD BEEN UNDER STRICT INSTRUCTION NOT TO BECOME INVOLVED IN ANTI-INDIAN CHARGES. ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THERE HAD BEEN MUCH DISCUSSION IN ISLAMABAD ABOUT THE EVENTUAL POSSIBILITY OF AN INDIAN DIVERSIONARY MOVE AGAINST PAKISTAN AND THE NEED FOR THE GOP TO BE PRUDENTLY ALERT AGAINST THIS POSSIBILITY, MEHDI INSISTED THAT ALL SUCH DISCUSSION HAD BEEN PRIVATE AND HAD NOT BEEN USED BY PAK MISSIONS OVERSEAS. AS FOR THE PAKS ORGANIZING ANTI-INDIAN DEMONSTRATIONS, MEHDI ARGUED THAT THIS WAS BEYOND THE GOP'S CAPACITY. HE CLAIMED THAT THERE WERE TIES BETWEEN THE JAMAAT-I-ISLAM AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN THE MUSLIM COUNTRIES, MAKING SUCH DEMONSTRATIONS NATURAL.

3. MEHDI ALSO CITED THE ATTITUDE OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION TO THE AUGUST SALAL DAM DISCUSSIONS IN ISLAMABAD AS A FURTHER CAUSE FOR CONCERN. HE SAID THE INDIAN ATTITUDE HAD "STIFFENED" FROM THE POSITION
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TAKEN BY THE GOI NEGOTIATORS DURING THE PREVIOUS MONTH'S NEGOTIATIONS IN NEW DELHI.

4. FINALLY MEHDI NOTED THAT INDIAN FOREIGN SECRETARY KEVAL SINGH HAD NOT YET REPLIED TO THE INVITATION THE GOP HAS NOW SENT HIM INVITING HIM TO HEAD A GOI DELEGATION TO A THIRD ROUND OF TALKS ON THE DEADLOCKED CIVIL AIR ISSUE IN ISLAMABAD. HE

AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT GIVEN KEWAL SINGH'S ABSENCE FROM INDIA TO ATTEND THE LIMA NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE, MEA MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO GET OUR AN APPROPRIATE REPLY.

5. MEHDI SPECULATED THAT THIS COMBINATION OF DEVELOPMENTS MIGHT SIGNAL A HARDENING OF INDIAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS NORMALIZATION. POL COUNSELOR STATED THAT WE HAD NO EVIDENCE OF ANY CHANGE IN BASIC INDIAN COMMITMENT TO THE SIMLA PROCESS AND MENTIONED POSSIBILITY THAT CONTEST BETWEEN GOI AND GOP FOR UNSC SEAT MIGHT BE MUDDYING THE WATERS. MEHDI REPLIED THAT IF SO THIS WOULD BE REGRETTABLE. HE RECALLED THAT IN NEW DELHI DISCUSSIONS IN MAY TWO SIDES HAD HAD AMIABLE TALK ABUT UNSC RACE AND HAD AGREED THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE A DIVISIVE ISSUE BETWEEN THEM.

6. IN CONNECTION WITH UNSC CONTEST, MEHDI EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT INDIA HAD NOT SUCCEEDED IN WINNING EITHER DIRECT OR NON-DIRECT ENDORSEMENT OF ITS CANDIDACY AT LIMA. HE SAID THE PAKS WERE NOW MORE CONFIDENT THAN THEY HAD BEEN BEFORE THE CONFERENCE. BASED ON HIS OWN EXPERIENCE AT THE PAK MISSION IN NEW YORK, HE SPECULATED THAT EFFORTS TO WORK OUT A CONSENSUS MIGHT DELAY A VOTE UNTIL OCTOBER OR NOVEMBER. HE AGREED THAT IF THE CONTEST WAS INDEED PROVING DETRIMENTAL TO IMPROVED INDO-PAK RELATIONS, SUCH A DELAY WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE.

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